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DIRECTORATE OF
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Communist China - Hong Kong: Protest over US use

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*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EST)

Military Situation in South Vietnam: The first ten-hour period of the New Year's truce has been marred by 11 minor violations.

The rate and nature of the violations are about on a par with those reported during the first hours of the Christmas cease-fire.

The cease-fire period began last evening at 6:00 PM EST and is scheduled to end at 6:00 PM EST on 1 January. No allied military operations are scheduled during the 48-hour truce period, but a full alert is being maintained.

According to delayed reports, a South Vietnamese force killed 35 Viet Cong troops on 29 December while fighting a series of skirmishes some 20 miles west of Can Tho town in the delta. The eight-battalion South Vietnamese force has reported killing approximately 125 enemy troops during a five-day ground sweep in Phong Dinh and Chuong Thien provinces. Friendly casualties have been light. (Map)

Political Developments in South Vietnam: The US Embassy has confirmed that the port strike in Saigon has ended and that dockworkers returned to their jobs yesterday.

The terms of the settlement have not been reported, although press reports indicate that the dockworkers' union accepted an earlier offer by US and South Vietnamese authorities to find employment at the main port for workers dismissed from the US military-controlled New Port. The break in the dockworkers strike followed the failure of a sympathy strike by other workers in Saigon which had been requested by the Saigon Council of Trade Unions.

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In another development, the Constituent Assembly met on 29 December to discuss the ruling Directorate's recent refusal to amend its veto power over the Assembly's draft constitution. The Assembly took no formal action, but the tenor of its discussion indicates clearly that delegates are dissatisfied with the Directorate's position and that a major confrontation with the government over the veto issue is still possible. [REDACTED]

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Communist China - Vietnam: Statements by a senior official in Peking suggest that the Chinese are concerned over recent third-party efforts to move North Vietnam toward negotiations.

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[redacted]
[redacted] victory in Vietnam could be won only on the battlefield and asserted that Hanoi agreed with Peking on this point. His discussion of the possibility of negotiations implied, however, that the Chinese are uneasy.

[redacted] even if Ho Chi Minh does negotiate a settlement it would not necessarily reflect a failure of Maoist theory. He indicated that the Chinese would explain such a development as an abandonment of the "correct path" by Hanoi under Soviet pressure. He declared that Peking would oppose this course as "deviationist" as it has opposed the line taken by Kim Il Sung in North Korea.

[redacted] expected the war to continue for at least two years and possibly longer. He asserted that the Vietnamese are still very strong and are inflicting heavy defeats on US forces. [redacted]
[redacted]

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Poland: The regime and the Church yesterday opened a direct dialogue indicating a serious effort by both sides to ease tensions.

Gomulka's chief aide, Zenon Kliszko, met with Cardinal Wyszynski's representative, Bishop Choromanski, in the first meeting since 1963 of the joint church-state commission. Although the meeting probably dealt with a recent dispute over state control of Catholic seminaries, it may also have provided both sides with an opening for future discussion of wider issues. Choromanski said that further meetings would be held, "although not in the nearest future."

Further discussions would also bolster renewed efforts to reach an agreement with the Vatican. Warsaw reiterated its interest to the Vatican prelate, Costa, during his visit to Poland in late November. Costa indicated, however, that no moves in this direction could be initiated without the acquiescence of Cardinal Wyszynski.

The prospects for a broader improvement in church-state relations will now depend in large part on the cardinal and his assessment of regime intentions. [REDACTED]

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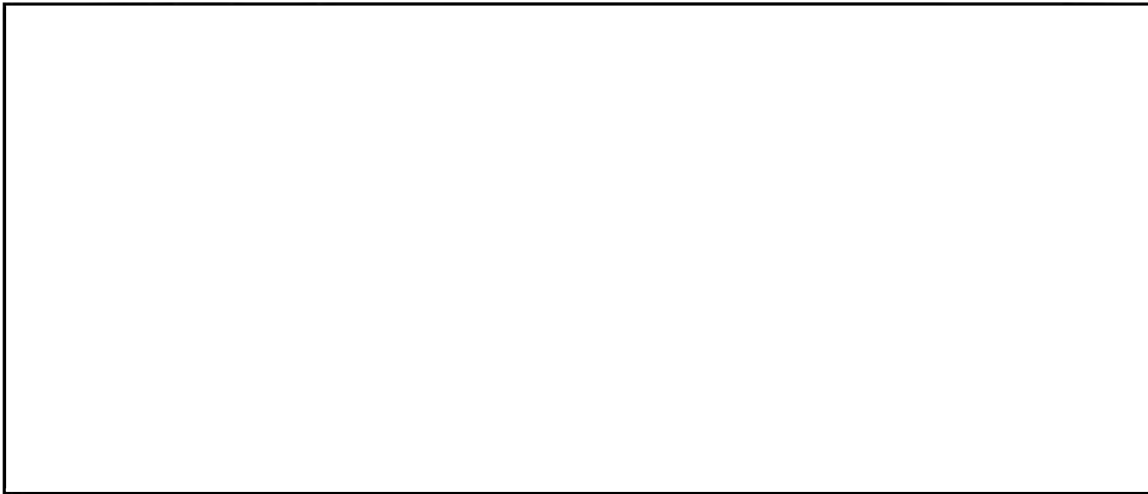
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Communist China - Hong Kong: Peking may be mounting a new campaign to curtail US use of Hong Kong as a leave port for forces from Vietnam. Peking radio on 30 December raised the issue for the first time since the formal Chinese protest to the British last February. Peking probably believes its recent success against Macao will give it increased leverage. The Chinese may harass the colony, but are unlikely to take extreme measures.

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